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SUBJECT: GUIDANCE FOR DECEMBER 11 UNSC CONSULTATIONS ON BURUNDI

**¶1.** (U) This is an action request. USUN should draw from the points in para 2 during the UN Security Council consultations on Burundi December 11.

**¶2.** Begin points:

I would like to thank (the UN Department of Political Affairs) for briefing the Council on the situation in Burundi. The US appreciates the efforts by the UN Integrated Office of Burundi, Executive Representative for Burundi Youssef Mahmoud, and the Peacebuilding Commission to enhance stability and security in Burundi. I would like to make four points.

First, we congratulate the Government of Burundi and PALIPEHUTU-FNL on the signing of their December 4 Summit Declaration. The committed efforts by Ugandan President Museveni, Zambian President Banda, AU Commission President Ping, Tanzanian Prime Minister Pinda, Rwandan Prime Minister Makuza, Kenyan Vice President and Minister of the Interior Msyoka, Ethiopian Minister of Culture and Tourism Dirir, South African Minister of Transportation Radebe and UN Secretary General Executive Representative Mahmoud, as well as the continuing work of South African Facilitator Ngakula, assisted in bringing the parties to this final declaration (Note: the listed persons were all part of the closed door session that resulted in the declaration). The declaration paves the way for durable peace and stability for all Burundians. We urge all parties to fully and quickly implement the terms of the declaration in order to allow Burundi's government to focus its attention on solidifying democracy and good governance, promoting economic development and actively serving and improving the lives of Burundi's people.

While this peace agreement is a significant achievement, we recognize the importance of continuing Security Sector Reform (SSR) in Burundi. In that light, the U.S. urges the Government of Burundi to continue its cooperation with BINUB in enacting sector-wide security reforms and completing the DDR process. The U.S. supports the UN SYG's recommendation for a new Burundi-specific demobilization and reintegration funding mechanism following the closing of the World Bank/Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program on December 31. We also urge the African Union to extend the mandate of its mission in Burundi

Secondly, the U.S. is concerned about continued violations of human rights, including the arrests and detentions of human rights activists working with labor organizations and in media. We are also particularly concerned about human rights violations in regards to the welfare of women and children. Children associated with the PALIPEHUTU-FNL should immediately be released and reunited with their families. Sexual violence against women and girls remains of deep concern and the U.S. strongly urges both UNICEF and BINUB to continue monitoring such cases. We also urge the Government of Burundi to arrest and vigorously prosecute those responsible for these acts to actively fight

the notion that those responsible for such crimes act with impunity.

Thirdly, the U.S. is pleased to recall Burundi's generally free and fair 2005 elections. As Burundi prepares for national elections in 2010, we encourage the Government of Burundi to prepare for a similarly free and fair process and polling, conducted in a transparent manner, free from bias. The U.S. supports the Peacebuilding Commission's work in assisting the country to create a conducive environment for the holding of such elections.

Fourth, the U.S. commends the efforts of the Government of Burundi, UNHCR and partner agencies to repatriate and reintegrate Burundian refugees. We are particularly impressed with progress in recent months that brings total returns to over 93,000 in 2008 and over 460,000 since repatriation began in 2002. The U.S. will continue to support UNHCR's Burundi repatriation program as well as the activities of non-governmental organizations providing reintegration assistance to Burundi returnees. We welcome news of other donor support. We remain concerned with the immense development challenges Burundi faces including issues concerning land tenure rights that make it difficult for returnees to restart their lives in Burundi. We encourage the Government of Burundi to do all it can at the national and local level to facilitate the reintegration process and help its people build productive lives.

Finally, the U.S. commends the progress made in Burundi in consolidating peace, and thanks the UN System in Burundi for its efforts on this front. The U.S. supports extending BINUB's mandate for an additional 12-month period. The integrated UN approach in Burundi is a helpful example for other UN missions.

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